1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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intermarry with the village of Nasangalau in every generation. Apparently the clan of Matailakemba are forming a similar connection with Mbau. The late High Chief initiated a similar connection with the clan of Tanggalevu; he, his son, and his granddaughter married into that clan. Relationships thus become intricate, one person being related to another in many ways.

Kinship involves much etiquette. The following excellent account of etiquette between relatives was given to me by Vola, great-grandson of the Third Lord of Naiau:

Father and child. Our fathers are treated with respect (*vakarokorokotaki*) though not feared by their children. A child may not carry off anything that has been in contact with him, such as clothes, mats, cups, etc.; he may not use his father's plate, nor eat his leavings, nor tread upon the place where he sleeps. He may take other things. If the father is noble, the children get swellings (*fula*) if they do these things. Greater respect is shown to an uncle; uncle and nephew may not speak together; to father and son all things are allowed except to such as are noble. They may not eat out of the same plate as the father, but they may eat at the same time. Among the common people (*kaisi*) there are no observances: a son will walk anywhere.

Mother and child. Children make light of their mothers and respect their fathers. They may take the mother's clothes provided they are not used by the father and may eat the food she leaves.

Brother and sister. Brothers [or sisters] may take each other's property. My wife's younger sister may take our property; so may my younger brothers. Brothers may not jest in an unseemly manner. The younger may not take the property of the elder, though the custom is breaking down. The elder may take the property of the younger, but it depends upon him. If he is reserved, and is not familiar, they fear him; but if he takes their things recklessly and plays with them they have no respect for him. Brothers in the nobility do not chat, or talk with an appearance of cheerfulness; they will only talk with glances at one another. It is usual for the elder to address the younger first.

It is forbidden for brother and sister to speak together or use the same clothes. If our sister is in the house we may not enter it, unless it is a case of necessity. If a brother goes to drink kava he may enter, if it is a kava held on some occasion, not merely to pay a visit. If he enters he keeps at a distance from his sister. If he is in the same house with her he studies his speech, so that it take no unseemly turn. If he comes and sees his sister he goes out again. At the present day they may both be present at a meal, if the father and mother are there and he keeps at a distance; he eats quickly and goes out. This begins when he reaches the age of reason. If a boy is not circumcised he may sleep in his father and mother's house (*vale soso*); he does not as yet get a bachelor's house (*mbure*); after circumcision he has one. If he is circumcised late and has attained to reason he may not stay in the house with his sister. I do not know of a single case in which brother and sister have had connection.

Grandfather and grandchild. The relationship of grandfather and grandchild involves etiquette. If the grandfather has something good, such as planted food he gives it to his grandchild. If the grandfather is a noble his grandchildren may not eat with him. They may take anything belonging to their grandfather except, in the case of nobles, what has touched his body. The same applies to father and son who are not noble.

Grandmother and grandchild. If the grandmother is a lady (*marama*), it is exactly the same, that is if she ranks higher (*turanga*) than the rest of the family. If

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565 she is not a lady the children will be free with her: they will eat on her bed and so on.

604 Uncle and nephew. In the relation of uncle and nephew impudence is forbidden; only the right of *vuru* [that is, seizing the uncle's property] is allowed. They use courtesies to one another (*veivakarokorokotaki*). Uncle and nephew may eat at the same time. Ratu Sukuna refused to dine with you on account of his uncle, Ratu Finau, being present, because they would have been too close to one another; but they may eat in Fijian fashion because they sit at a distance from one another. If one speaks the other takes no notice (*vakawelewele*); he looks down; they do not converse as they would at an European meal. The etiquette between aunt and niece, or between opposite sexes is the same.

605 The remarks by Vola concerning cousins may perhaps be better understood by referring to the following extract from his pedigree:

Cousins may take each other's property and tell the other afterwards. They may take things for good. One says "I'll just take this thing;" and takes it; if he chooses to return it, good; if not, so. But now I am married to Lave, Nemane, Taomba, and Silini may not take, or even ask for any apparel worn by me; they can only take lanterns and so on; it is as if Lave and I were one body. Nemane may not talk with Lave; Nemane and I may still joke. Yavutha may be impudent and carry away objects, clothes, etc., because he is not Lave's own brother; he is father to her. Longanimothe may be impudent, but may not take clothes and such things, because he is Lave's brother through his father. If a man speaks his cousin may say, "It's a lie; it's a lie"; a younger brother may not. A cousin may take a whole field of taro without blowing the conch; only the sister's son blows the conch. There is no feast of putting on the loin cloth [which gives a nephew the right to seize his uncle's property]."

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834 Cousins of opposite sexes who are not man and wife may take each other's property without leave: thus Mele may take my things. They are impudent to one another. They may tell each other to do a thing; thus I will tell Mele to wash my clothes. They may not have sexual intercourse; it is bad for them to do so, especially if it is done under the cover of domestic relations [*vakavundei*, a term which applies also to bachelors living together], that is by giving her clothes to wash, and then profiting by it to have connection. It is better if they have connection, after having had no ordinary relations. It is worse if a man commits adultery with his brother's wife; it is not so serious if she is the wife of a stranger.

There is no prohibition between man and wife; no restrictions; the women prepare the food. I think formerly a noble would eat with his chief wife (*alewa mbau*), the others serving. The wife may or may not eat with her husband, he being noble or not, as she pleases.

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565 Observation confirms Vola's statement that there is no special etiquette towards the father and mother, unless they are noble; but if they are noble

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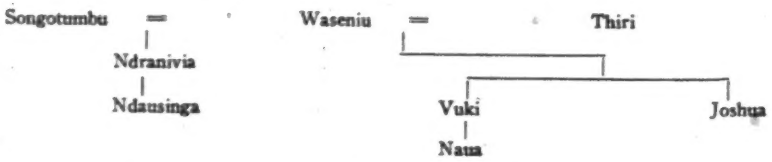
there is great reserve between them and their adult or adolescent children. The eldest son, aged about thirteen, of the High Chief always spoke of his father as Ratu, which may be translated The Noble Lord. Though I was constantly in the house of the leading nobleman I saw his son there only once, and that was when they were leaving for Tonga; and even then they took very little notice of one another. The only time I saw the same nobleman's wife at her son's house they exchanged no greeting and took no notice of one another.

This attitude it is which Vola describes as *vakawelewele* (careless, indifferent, not attending) and it is characteristic of those relationships that forbid familiarity. In marked contrast was the attitude of persons differently connected or not connected at all. People of far lower rank than a nobleman will chat freely with him though respectfully, and use his name with no honorary prefix such as Ratu or Roko.

A man ranks before his father's younger brother, yet he respects and obeys him. In the following pedigree Ndausinga is the son of a still older brother than Naua's father; according to Joshua, Ndausinga comes first; but it was also held that it was possible for Joshua to come first because he and Ndausinga's father had different mothers; on the other hand Naua's father and Joshua had the same mother, so Nana comes first.




A man formerly addressed his younger brother's son as *leikai* or *iyau*. The word *iyau* is also a formal expression (*vakatuturanga*) addressed by a man to his servants (*ona tamata*).

A grandchild is apt to be spoiled; it is a common sight to see him sidling up to the grandparents or sitting on their laps.

Seniority among brothers is expressed by saying that one is old, the other young (*ngone*) the common Fijian way of expressing the comparative.

The relations between brothers were best observed at Joshua's. Joshua would sit in the middle or towards the upper end of his house, facing the door at the lower end, talking in his usual decided way to any one but his brother, who would sit in a dark corner beside the door, presenting a three-quarter view to Joshua and appearing utterly indifferent to conversation, even about himself; he might be munching at the remnants of Joshua's meal. When addressed he would reply shortly without looking at his brother. Vuki, the eldest brother, was the head of the family preceding his death;

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wangga there is no precedence, because they have different mothers. The reason why I do not speak in Salesi's presence is that Salesi comes first in Vatuwangga, because Kilai, Salesi's father's father, was Taliai's eldest son. The reason why I may not speak to Liwaki is that he is a descendant of Malani, the eldest son of Rasolo. Liwaki may not speak to Ratu Finau, the High Chief, because Liwaki is the son of a younger brother. Yet Salesi may converse with Liwaki because they are brothers through their mothers.

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Thus the statement that there is no precedence in the clan must be qualified: there are certain persons whose birth makes them great within the clan. Thus the late Rasolo, the third Lord of Naiau's daughter's son, was reported to have been a strong-minded man, perhaps because he prided himself on his rank: his mother was the daughter of Taliai, older than all the children of Taliai except the eldest son. In jest I was set down as Melaia Lutu's son, and told on that account I might send on errands the son of Melaia's "little sister"—by European reckoning, a cousin. The rank and file of the descendants of Niumataiwalu, ancestor of the nobility, however, lived on terms of easy familiarity.

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The avoidance between own brothers seems to be connected in the minds of the people with the avoidance of brother and sister. The same avoidance as that between brother and sister is exercised between aunt and nephew, aunt and niece, uncle and niece, as between uncle and nephew, and between a man and his wife's mother, whether *veiwungoni* are uncle and nephew or father-in-law and son-in-law. Respect is paid to the father's sister if she is older than the father, but not if she is younger. A woman will use respectful language (*vaka rokoroko*) to her elder brother's son. I could hear of no special functions of the father's sister.

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According to Lakemban custom, a man does not use terms of respect to the mother's brother if the mother is the elder, whereas in Viti Levu the polite adverb *saka* is user regardless of precedence. The High Chief's elder sister's eldest son is greater than his uncle, because his mother is the elder sister, but he follows the Mbauan custom, not being acquainted with the Lauan; he uses the term *saka* and the second person plural in addressing his uncle; he generally sits at the lower end of the house while his uncle sits at the top. The Chief can speak to his nephew, but "it is difficult for his nephew to answer." They only could converse in private. The Chief on the other hand used the second person plural to his nephew, but not the word *saka*; he would keep away from the school grounds because his nephew was there. They never walked together, though indifferent as to which of them went first. Sometimes at kava the High Chief would pass on his cup to his nephew.

The mother's people are frequently referred to collectively as "your uncles" and a man would be told to "get a wife, as is fitting, from your uncles."

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554 A nephew is spoken of as *vasu*, which appears to be a title, not a real kinship term. It does not take the suffixed possessive; *vasunda* is not used in this connection, but *nonda vasu*. A man is constantly described as *vasu* to such a place, or to such a clan, never to an individual. Frequently when a man's name has been forgotten, he is still remembered as "the *vasu* to Totoya," or "the *vasu* to Tonga." Historical accounts constantly specify the place to which a personage was *vasu*, or discuss the point, if forgotten. This is especially true with the older generations of the pedigrees. The term is never applied to a woman.

604 425 There is a verb *vasu-ta* which describes the nephew's seizing of any property that belongs to his mother's people. A son of a Naivi man by a Tumbou woman says:

> Formerly a *vasu* could take such things as pigs, and yams, etc., from the mother's people. I could take a pig belonging to the Lord of Tumbou. Roko Liwaki and Ratu Salesi could take things from Naivi, because they are *vasu* to it. If a *vasu* wanted taro he would stick reeds in the taro patch he wanted or sound the conch over the taro. Joshua would know then, "Oh! Liwaki or Salesi has stuck reeds among the taro." This meant the *vasu* had taken possession. The expression used was: "the taro patch has been stuck with reeds" (*sa sauni tu a mbiti mai ka*); the reeds were called *i sausau* [that is, the thing used to prick]. Other wood was used besides reeds.

The tendency nowadays is simply to beg (*kerekere*), not to take without leave, for the Government treats the exercise of the right as theft. It may be noted that the *vasu* to Tumbou may take the Lord of Tumbou's pigs, though the Lord of Tumbou is not "his uncle," however distantly. It is more accurate, therefore, to say that a man can seize the property of his mother's brother's clan, than that he may take the property of the mother's brother.

The uncle, on the other hand, had a right known as *vakambale i titoko*, "causing the staff to fall." One informant says, "If Salesi or Liwaki took Joshua's taro, Joshua would take some of theirs in return. It will then be said the staff falls. One must do *vasu* first, then make the staff fall afterwards, not before." Another says a nobleman may send for a thing belonging to sister's son "that the staff may fall, if a staff falls on a thing, it is damaged." Still another is not quite certain, but he thinks it is right for the nephew simply to take anything he likes, while the uncle, for anything he fancies, sends to the nephew, who cannot refuse. He also applies, doubtfully, the expression "making the staff fall" to the nephew's appropriations as well as the uncle's, but he is alone in this. The uncle's privilege seems but little exercised; only one informant mentioned it spontaneously by accident; whereas no one can be long in Fiji without hearing of the nephew's right. Although the uncle may in a way recoupe himself, the nephew's

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right is a burden (*ka ni ongo*) because the nephew exercises his right recklessly (*vakasausu*) and to an excessive degree (*rui vulatu me sivia*).

The father of the boy who is a *vasu* to Naivi will make a feast called *vakatoka masi*, putting on the loin cloth for the people of Naivi. *Much stuff* is given to Naivi; then the boy has the right to *vasu;* otherwise he may not *vasu*.

Some *vasu* are spoken of as great *vasu*. A man may be *vasu* to the whole of Lau. Thus one Mbauan chief who was *vasu* to Lau was a great *vasu* because through his mother, the daughter of the second son of the second Sau, he had in him blood from Lakemba, Ono, Moala, Totoya, and Matuku. He was "a wide *vasu*, he covered the whole of Lau." If a great *vasu* came to Lakemba, he wore a train in front and one behind.

Another reason given was that he was *vasu itaukei* (possessor, owner, native), which may be translated native *vasu* or home *vasu*. A man of Thekena defines a home *vasu* as "'a noble who is *vasu* to us, the owners of the land." He thus takes *itaukei* (owner) to refer to the "owners of the land," that is the Tumbou half of the village. The same informant adds that this Mbauan chief was home *vasu* because he was *vasu* to Thekena, who were noble (because of his father's mother). The view that the home *vasu* is a nobleman who is *vasu* to the people of the land, that is to the heralds or the Tumbou half, is borne out by six of the seven cases which I have noted: Soroanggali, mother from Narewandamu or Thekena; Vuetasau, mother of Tanggalevu, Roko Dhovu, mother doubtful; Tione Wesile, mother of Waitambu, which is subject to Thekena; Uluilakemba I, mother from Thekena; Uluilakemba II, on account of his father Vuetasau.

Of old the home *vasu* alone was important in Lau. The *vasu* to Mbau and the *vasu* to Thakaundrove had no other title, and were treated almost as strangers for they had little prestige. Nowadays the office of home *vasu* bears less weight, and that of the *vasu* to Mbau is important only on account of the Government. Formerly only the home *vasu* was a great nobleman. That is why Soroanggali said to his younger brother Taliai, who was *vasu* to Totoya, "Be you chief that I may look after you." He himself had quite enough power without the chieftainship.

A man will often speak of himself as belonging to his mother's land. That does not mean that he does not belong to his father's country, but merely that he is at home in his mother's country.

The verb *osi* (to foster, bring up, adopt) is a term of very wide meaning. Children are not adopted in the European sense, for they continue to be considered the children of their father and mother, and relationships remain unaltered. Thus, a boy of my acquaintance did not become the brother of his adopted parents' son, but remained his sister's son (*vungo*). A small

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arrangement. Thus Taraivosa got the land of her father, Mburua of Natokatoka, for her son; Mburua on his death had given it to one Tokai of Vatuwangga; when Tokai died it passed to Rasolo, also of Vatuwangga, who was "brother" to Tokai; Taraivosa begged the land for her son, and Rasolo promised to give it as soon as her son began to pay taxes. 423 562

A man gets land through his mother if he comes to live with his mother's people. 423

Though in some cases it looks at first sight as though land had passed out of the clan, this does not actually happen. Thus Joshua and his people lived on land which his father had begged from Lemaki, the hereditary carpenter; but Lemaki holds land from the nobles only so long as he lives in Lakemba. Tiope of the clan of Ndaulakemba in Levuka held the land of Osea of the clan of Manukuira, because they had lived together, and Tiope was working off Osea's debts; nevertheless the land was spoken of as belonging to Osea's son, a boy of about thirteen.

If a member of the clan dies without issue his land reverts to his "edge of the oven." Ratu Finau however had all the edges of the oven put down as one in the Lands Enquiry so that now the land reverts to Katumbalevu as a whole. 423 614

It was definitely laid down that land could not go out of the clan except as *wa ni kuna*, the strangling rope, *ka ni mbula*, the price of life, or as *i thovithovi ni ndraundrau*, the wherewithal to pluck leaves for plates. The strangling rope is land given to kinsmen of a deceased nobleman's wife for strangling her at his death. The price of life is land given by a man to one who has saved his life. The wherewithal to pluck leaves is land given away as a woman's dowry; the land is supposed to keep her supplied with banana and breadfruit leaves on which to place the food. Such land is also called *i kaukau ni alewa* (that which is brought with a woman). 425 [766] [583]

It was indeed said that a lady marrying a "small man" would also bring a dowry, and I know of one such case where the father of a lady of Naivi gave some land when she married a man of Levuka; the land is now held by the man's son. But this does not appear to be a common practice, for I was told that the reason why a lady does not bring land to the "landsmen" is that her people have no land to give. The Chief of Nasangalau says the same of his village: the nobles there had no land but what they got from other clans through their mothers. 425 583 565

A nobleman will sometimes perform what is called *vakalutululu*, causing to fall; this is a present of manufactured articles to his son's maternal uncles, in order to "make the land fall"—that is, to get land for his son. Meli, the head of Naivi, thus got land from his mother's clan, Tumbou; 425 604 565

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others got land in this way from Narewandamu. A sister's son may not seize land by right of *vasu* (*vasuta*); he can only get it by "causing to fall."

Of old, Matailakemba, Vatuwangga, and the rest had each their strangers from Totoya, from Tonga, and other parts. A stranger got land from the edge of the oven to which he was attached; when he died it went back to the clan. Since the Lands Commission has been inaugurated, this is no longer possible, as the Tongans have been grouped together as a side of the oven; the land is therefore lost to the four groups of nobles and remains with the Tongans. There are some Solomon Islanders now living in Tanggalevu and treated as members of the clan. In olden times, a nobleman would beg a bit of land to plant in, and when the food was mature he would share it with the owner.

Some Europeans take the view that the land belongs to the chiefs; this is a claim made by some of the chiefs and nobles. Ratu Finau claims that all the land as far as Ono is the property of the Sau. "It belongs to the Chief: God appointed him."

Salesi, a nobleman (Pl. I, *A*) expressed the following opinion concerning a disputed land:

> Navutoka properly belongs to Thekena. It belongs to Katumbalevu in so far as the nobles have smitten Thekena; but it is not right for the chiefs to oppress the people. Some people imagine they are chiefs by themselves and forget that, but for the landsmen, they would not be chiefs. The present nobility owe much to Yandrana because the nobles used to invade Lakemba from Yandrana[28] and Yandrana and Natokalau took their part against Thekena. A chief is apt to forget that the ancients of Yandrana and Natokalau died for their sakes.

Joshua, a nobleman, says, "The chief only disposed of what was brought to them. He did not dispose of the land; each owner disposed of his own."

Semi of Tanggalevu says,

> The nobles of old had no land; they had only the authority (*leva*); it is only since the Tongan rule and the Government that it extends to the soil. They could not take land; only the sister's son could bring land to the nobles; the elders of the landsmen (*matua 'kai vanua*) would decide to give land for their sister's son to plant in. The nobles used to refer to us landsmen. Land would be provided for strangers by Envoy to Mbau, Envoy to Thithia (that is Thekena), and the Lord of Tumbou. If Roko Taliai wanted land for the people of Levuka he would say, "Tui Tumbou, let it be your part to provide taro land for the Levuka people to plant in." And the land was given. To Envoy to Mbau he would say, "Give some land to the Tongans." He did not dispose of it; he referred it to the old men.

## CHATTELS

All property other than land is called either food (*kakana*) or manufactured articles (*i yau*). These two categories are continually opposed to

[28] When they came over from Naiau to conquer Lakemba.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kamba'ra



### GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN

603 *Veitukani* is the collective term for grandfather and grandchild, *veitumbuni* for grandmother and grandchild. A man honors his grandfather's older brother, whom he designates as *tuku levu* (big grandfather). His attitude toward his real grandfather is one of respectful familiarity. He addresses his grandfather by the respectful term *tukai* or *tua* (which the natives say is a Tongan word) and does not use his personal name. The same terms are used to address his grandfather's younger brother. A man may take the clothes and garden food of his real grandfather without permission and may request his pigs and chickens and the use of his coconut groves. Grandparents indulge grandchildren, taking their part against parents. A man respects his grandmother's older sister, and the polite form of address is *tumbu levu* (big [576] grandmother). For the grandmother and her younger sister, *mbui* is correct. Children call their grandmothers *tutu* or *pupu*. Children spend much time with their grandparents, who lavish attention upon them.

### VEIVUNGONI AND VASU

● 604 The collective term *veivungoni* includes the mother's brother and his wife, father's sister and her husband, father-in-law and mother-in-law, son-in-law 606 and daughter-in-law, and the child of one's sibling of the opposite sex. A strict [835] reciprocal avoidance is observed between *veivungoni*. Sexual intercourse is tabu between them. They avoid meeting, speaking to one another, and never look at one another. When they are together they keep the head and eyes lowered and avoid saying more than is necessary. The words come slowly and heavily in a trembling voice. Jokes and references to sex are prohibited. A woman does not tell her mother-in-law when she is pregnant nor does she discuss childbirth with her. Her mother-in-law may, however, assist with the delivery, and treat her daughter-in-law if she is ill. Those standing in the *vungo* relationship (p. 57) do not address one another with personal names [576] but use the polite second person plural, *kemundrau*. The polite term of address for mother's older brother and for father's older sister's husband is *mono*, and the polite term for the father's older sister and the mother's older brother's wife is *ngane*. These two terms are used without the possessive suffix. It is tabu to curse one's *mono* or *ngane*. *Veivungoni* may enter the same house, eat together, drink in the same kava circle and eat one another's left over food. Although sleeping in the same house is not allowed, it is quite common for a widowed mother-in-law to live in the house of the son-in-law (table 1).

604 *Veivungoni* are allowed to take each other's property without asking. This 606 privilege is formalized in the *vasu* relationship which exists between a man 618 and the clan of his mother's brother. A man is the *vasu* of his mother's brother's clan and has, therefore, the privilege of appropriating the clan prop-

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara



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erty without permission. The obligations of the mother's brother regarding the *vasu* are inherited by the mother's clan, so that as long as the *vasu* lives he may exercise *vasu* rights.

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The *vasu* rights of a high chief extend to all his mother's people. For instance, the son of the sister of the high chief of Lau may, in the capacity of *vasu*, demand property from all the islands of the Lau group. He is called the great *vasu*, and his demands are a form of tribute.

The first *vasu* ceremony is conducted by the *vasu's* father when the *vasu* is a child. The father collects mats, tapa, sennit, and whales' teeth from his subclan. This property is called *i yau ni vaka lutulutu*. The father presents it according to the ceremonial presentation pattern (pp. 65-68) to the mother's brother, who accepts it and divides it among the members of his subclan. The ceremony gives the *vasu* the privilege of taking property at any time from the subclan of his mother's brother. He may take food from his uncle's garden and may kill and eat his pigs. Anything he requests according to the soliciting system (p. 207) will be granted. The maternal uncle, on the other hand, has the right to retaliate by taking property from the subclan of his *vasu*. This is called "causing the staff to fall" (*vakambale i titoko*). The privilege is, however, seldom exercised. (Hocart, 15, p. 40.)

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The *vasu* relationship is technically a formalized exchange of property with deferred payment and not a one-sided appropriation. The exchange is not reciprocally balanced since eventually the *vasu* receives the larger share of property. It is a form of affinal exchange, one of the series of ceremonial exchanges of property between the paternal and the maternal clans which occur also at marriage, birth, and death. The *vasu* relationship in Lau serves to establish and emphasize a strong tie between a man and his mother's clan in a patrilineal society. Just as through patrilineal descent a man inherits membership with its privileges and obligations in the clan of his father, so through the *vasu* relationship he inherits a definite status accompanied by privileges and obligations in the clan of his mother.

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Cross-cousin marriage is consistent with and may be genetically connected with the concept of the *vasu*. A man preferably takes a wife from the clan of his mother. As *vasu* he has the right to demand his mother's brother's daughter. The marriage involves a ceremonial exchange of property between the clan of his father and that of his mother and more closely knits the *vasu* with his mother's clan.

The avoidance observed between *vungo* reaches its highest expression between the *vasu* and his maternal uncle. The tabus between *vungo* are emphasized in the *vasu* relationship, and an attitude of respect is shown on both sides.

The chief of Kambara says that the *vasu* relationship originated in the *vakalutulutu* custom of the early inhabitants. He says that formerly among the

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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604 606 618 land people the *vasu* did not exist, but that the mother's brother's clan prepared and assembled property for the sister's son. They then notified the sister's son, who came and took the property, which was called his share (*vakalutu-lutu*). This suggests that the formal presentation of property between the mother's brother and the sister's son is old in Lau. The idea of seizure of [177] property may be intrusive from Tonga where it is a part of the *fahu* (*vasu*) institution. (Gifford, 9, pp. 22-23.)

## SOCIAL CEREMONIAL

554 576 Social life in Lau conforms to strict rules of etiquette based on rank. The same pattern of behavior, with variations in degree of elaboration according to rank, is used down the whole social scale. Each individual observes the main rules of the polite (*vakarokoroko*) etiquette toward persons, whether related or not, of higher rank or toward persons who stand in the avoidance [867 558] relationship. The rules are learned by children before the age of seven or eight, and infringement of them causes a loss of social prestige.

The fine points of chiefly etiquette are known only by high ranking persons who have at some time been members of the chief's court at Tumbou, where social life is most highly formalized.

554 576 643 198 In the presence of the high chief one behaves in the polite manner. No one is allowed to stand erect. Persons of low rank sit before him cross-legged with bowed heads. They often tremble with excitement. They are ashamed and look down at the ground. They crouch or bend low when he passes. Persons of low rank rarely speak in the presence of the chief. Respect is shown by silence. Joking is forbidden. A special phraseology, called polite speech (*vosa vakarokoroko*) is used in the chief's presence. This phraseology is in the Mbauan dialect and consists mainly of metaphors employed instead of the usual terms for parts of the body, actions, property, and personal rela- [184] tionship. Polite speech is used mainly on Lakemba. It is rarely heard in southern Lau and few natives know it. (Hocart, 15, pp. 46-49.)

The chiefly greeting (*tama*) consists of the exclamation, "O . . . . oa!" All [689] chiefly ceremonial is in the polite speech. Formerly infringement of chiefly etiquette in the presence of the chief was punished by clubbing or death, depending upon the rank of the chief and upon the offense. A simplified form of chiefly etiquette is used in the presence of minor chiefs and relatives who stand in the respect relationship.

554 576 Guests visiting a man's house observe definite rules of etiquette. No one except the owner is allowed to sit on the foundation mound or the door sill of the house. The interior of the house is divided into three parts. The lower end of the house (*sue*), extending from the main entrance (*katumba i sue* or *katumba kumba i ra*) to the first supporting posts, is public. The middle of the house (*mbuto ni vale*), the main section between the supporting posts, is

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resolved to sail to Vanua Balavu Island and seek the aid of the Ravunisa, the Chief of Loma Loma town there; moreover, a half-brother of theirs, named Kolimatua Kai Koso, was *vasu*[1] to the Loma Loma chief. 173

"Now Lakeba at this time was very powerful, and none of the other islands dared to rise against her; but Vanua Balavu was more daring than the others, being a long way off and half-way to Cakaudrove. (And the Ravunisa had no great fear of Lakeba, but even used to prepare a *dai*[2] for Lakeba, and cause her chiefs to bring him great stores of goods on the pretence that the mighty Cakaudrove chiefs were about to make war on her and needed conciliating.)

"So they came to Loma Loma, and stayed there with the Ravunisa, at the place called Na Kaniwai—where I have heard, sir, that you have lately caused to be built a fine dwelling-house of stone for your assistant. And great gales sprang up and lasted many weeks, as they do sometimes now, and when the seas abated the wind was not favourable for their returning; and then more gales arose, until it was over four moons that they had stayed with the Ravunisa. And Rasolo was *madua*[3] to have stayed so long, and so he promised to give his sister Sivoki to

[1] Nephew, and therefore by ancient right able to claim protection, assistance, or goods.
[2] Trap. [3] Ashamed.

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